

# DREAMS 4 RPS

*Let's Keep Dreaming!*

SECOND Draft for Review by the Richmond City School Board

Presented By: Jason Kamras, Superintendent

Venue: Richmond City School Board Meeting

Date: August 5, 2024

# Our Goals for the Next 5 Years

## Revised Goals

Our 3 Big Goals		Description
1	School Ratings	Increase number of schools identified as “on track” or “distinguished” under new accountability system.
2	Graduation	Increase graduation rate as well as the percentage of graduates attending a 4-year or 2-year college, entering the workforce in a living wage job, or participating in national service.
3	Academics	Increase proficiency in all SOL subjects with a special focus on 3rd grade reading.

Other Key Goals		Description
4	Equity	Increase percentage of 8th graders enrolling in Algebra I and passing the SOL, and increase percentage of high school students enrolling in AP and scoring a 3 or above on end-of-course exam.
5	Teacher Retention	Increase teacher retention.
6	Satisfaction	Increase student, family, and staff satisfaction.
7	Enrollment & Diversity	Increase overall student enrollment and increase student economic diversity at each school.
8	Attendance	Decrease chronic absenteeism.
9	Climate	Decrease repeat suspensions.
10	Funding	Increase funding from local, state, federal, and philanthropic sources.

## 5 “Big Bets” for Priority 1: Exciting and Rigorous Teaching & Learning

### Priority 1: Exciting and Rigorous Teaching & Learning

#### 1.1 – Reading

Implement [Passion4Reading](#), a “moonshot” effort to ensure 100% of RPS 3rd graders learn to read proficiently and joyfully. To include:

- Comprehensive and ongoing training, led by RPS literacy coaches, on our evidence-based literacy curricula
- Classroom observation and feedback cycles focused explicitly on enhancing teachers’ skill with evidence-based literacy instruction
- Family workshops to help parents and caregivers learn evidence-based strategies to support their students’ literacy development at home
- Investment in 100-book home libraries for families of preschool-3rd grade students
- Increased compensation for expert reading teachers serving in our highest needs schools

#### 1.2 – High School Redesign

Implement [Passion4Learning](#), a complete redesign of our comprehensive high schools, anchoring them in rigorous theme-based programming that prioritizes peer collaboration, hands-on learning, and intentional preparation for enrollment in higher education, employment in a living wage position, or enlistment in national service. Proposed themes:

- CARE: Health, Human Services, and Education – Armstrong High School
- CONNECT: Global Business, International Affairs, and Languages – Huguenot High School
- CREATE: Engineering, Construction, Energy, and Sustainability – New Maury Street High School
- EXPRESS: Visual, Performing, and Digital Arts – Richmond High School for the Arts
- INNOVATE: Computer Science and Emerging Technology – John Marshall High School
- LEAD: Public Policy, Law & Government, and IB – Thomas Jefferson High School

## 5 “Big Bets” for Priority 1: Exciting and Rigorous Teaching & Learning

### Priority 1: Exciting and Rigorous Teaching & Learning

#### 1.3 – Special Education

Continue to prioritize meeting the unique needs of students with disabilities, with the goal of becoming a model school system for students with special needs. To include:

- Additional training for special education and general education teachers on evidence-based inclusion practices
- Expanded training for families on understanding the 504 and IEP processes, as well as how to navigate RPS special education resources
- Intentional programming for “twice exceptional” students (those with disabilities and advanced skills)

#### 1.4 – Multilingual Learners

Continue to prioritize meeting the unique needs of our multilingual learners, the fastest growing segment of the RPS student body. To include:

- More LIEP teachers to create true co-teaching models at all schools, along with intentional professional learning for both LIEP and non-LIEP teachers to ensure core instruction meets needs of MLs
- Programming to increase a sense of belonging for MLs at high schools
- Dual language programs at 3 more elementary schools, with expansion to middle and high school, including a Spanish Immersion Center for MLs and non-MLs
- Family Advocacy and Literacy series at all Southside schools
- Yearlong orientation to the US and RPS for recent immigrant families

#### 1.5 – Extended Learning Time

Continue to prioritize extended learning time opportunities, including RPS200, based on student outcome data. To include:

- A multi-year research study of RPS200 to better understand its impact and how it can be improved
- Enriching, hands-on after-school and weekend experiences that grow students’ knowledge about the world and vocabulary, both of which are critical to reading comprehension
- Enhanced summer school programming that incorporates more science-focused hands-on learning experiences (e.g., exploration of the James River ecosystem)

## 5 “Big Bets” for Priority 2: Skilled and Supported Staff

### Priority 2: Skilled and Supported Staff

#### 2.1 – Zero Teacher Vacancies

Launch [Passion4Teaching](#), a multi-pronged effort to ensure that RPS has 0 teacher vacancies. To include:

- Training for school leaders on effective people management skills to ensure they develop school cultures that foster a sense of belonging and share ownership
- Targeted “boutique” outreach and cultivation of our most accomplished educators to ensure that we retain them
- Expansion of our “grow our own” program – SEED – which helps instructional assistants and long-term substitutes who have a bachelor’s degree become fully licensed teachers
- Expansion of recruitment team to enable us to strategically target experienced teachers to come to RPS with the goal of limiting new-to-teaching hires to less than 25% of new-to-RPS hires

#### 2.2 – Male Teachers of Color

Expand [RVAMenTeach](#) to double the number of male teachers of color in RPS. To include:

- Increased investment in the retention of male teachers of color, including intentional cohort experiences that foster a sense of belonging, enhance expertise, and provide leadership development
- Expanded partnerships with HBCUs and fraternities for a stronger pipeline of male teachers of color
- New program to help Black and Latino male RPS students interested in education to become teachers in RPS

#### 2.3 – Leadership Development

Develop an internal leadership development program to train instructional coaches, assistant principals, and principals. To include:

- Paid residency experience to allow aspiring leaders to learn alongside accomplished RPS coaches, APs, and principals
- Partnership with local graduate schools of management and education (TBD) to provide graduate-level leadership and literacy training for all participants in pipeline program

## 5 “Big Bets” for Priority 2: Skilled and Supported Staff

### Priority 2: Skilled and Supported Staff

#### 2.4 – Compensation

Continue to invest in RPS teachers to ensure they are the highest paid in the Commonwealth. To include:

- Aggressive advocacy with the General Assembly to ensure the Commonwealth funds the recommendations of the JLARC K-12 education funding study
- Prioritize teacher compensation and other incentives (such as down payment assistance) in budget discussions with the City of Richmond to ensure RPS teachers can continue to live in the city
- Expanded bonuses and base salary increases for teachers serving in our highest poverty schools
- External compensation review to ensure RPS remains competitive across all job categories

#### 2.5 – Customer Service

Continue to refine back office practices to ensure an outstanding candidate and employee experience. To include:

- Resolute commitment to a response to all emails and phone calls to the Talent Office within two business days
- Annual review of all HR systems to identify efficiencies and upgrades to the user experience
- Intentional, proactive outreach to employees to ensure they have answers to any questions they may have regarding compensation, benefits, and leave
- Elimination of as many paper forms as possible to allow employees to complete all employment related activity online

## 5 “Big Bets” for Priority 3: Safe, Healthy, and Loving School Culture

### Priority 3: Safe, Healthy, and Loving School Culture

3.1 – 6th/9th Grade Transitions	Develop 6th and 9th grade academies within middle/high schools to foster student belonging and success
3.2 – Trauma Responsiveness	Train and certify every school based staff member in a rigorous trauma responsive curriculum
3.3 – Student Mental Health	Implement an evidence-based anti-bullying program to improve student mental health
3.5 – Food	Partner with our most experienced food service team members, local chefs, and restaurants to develop the most delicious, nutritious, and culturally diverse meal program in the Commonwealth
3.5 – Athletics	Expand athletic offerings to ensure all middle/high schools offer every VHSL sport

\*Additional details (like those included for Priorities 1 and 2) will be available for our September 9 meeting.

## 5 “Big Bets” for Priority 4: Deep Partnership with Families & Community

### Priority 4: Deep Partnership with Families & Community

4.1 – PTAs/PTOs	Ensure every school has an active, diverse, and empowered PTA or PTO that supports student success
4.2 – Family Partnership	Expand investment in the family liaison program to deepen our connections with families of all backgrounds, support them with whatever needs they have, and foster strong student attendance
4.3 – Community Partnership	Organize community partners to more intentionally support our high school redesign and reading efforts
4.4 – Telling Our Story	Enhance communication about the inherent greatness in our students, and the efforts RPS is making to support them
4.5 – Richmond/RPS History	Train all staff on the history of Richmond and RPS and its impact on our work today

\*Additional details (like those included for Priorities 1 and 2) will be available for our September 9 meeting.



## 5 “Big Bets” for Priority 5: Modern Systems & Infrastructure

### Priority 5: Modern Systems & Infrastructure

5.1 – Facilities	Develop new master facilities plan, advocate for necessary funding, and execute first phase of plan
5.2 – Building Maintenance	Continue to invest in building maintenance, with special emphasis on ensuring buildings are always clean, safe, and well stocked with necessary supplies
5.2 – Systems	Implement new student information system to enhance the student, family, and teacher experience
5.3 – Transportation	Continue to improve on-time arrival rate, enhance student and family experience, and prepare for electric
5.4 – Technology	Develop a robust AI plan for both students and staff, and enhance division’s cybersecurity

\*Additional details (like those included for Priorities 1 and 2) will be available for our September 9 meeting.

## Next Steps

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### Timeline

August 20 Board Meeting	Review and discuss second draft (Community feedback window will remain open)
September 9 Board Meeting	Review and discuss third draft (Community feedback window will remain open)
September 16 Board Meeting	TBD based on Board decision about focus of this meeting
October 7 Board Meeting	Review and discuss final draft (Community feedback window will remain open)
October 21 Board Meeting	Adopt final Dreams4RPS 2024-29

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